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QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS IN ANY PART OF THE WORLD, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO COLONIAL AND OTHER DEPENDENT COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES

Written statement submitted by the International Federation of Human Rights a non-governmental organization in consultative status (category II)

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1296 (XLIV).

[4 February 1994]

Human rights violations in Tibet

1. The International Federation of Human Rights (IFHR) expresses its serious concerns over systematic and gross violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Tibet by the People's Republic of China and regrets that no concrete measures are being taken by the Chinese authorities to end its four decades of repression and occupation in Tibet.

2. Today, the people of Tibet suffer from serious, continuing human rights violations which affect their lives as individuals and threaten their distinct cultural, religious and national identity as a people. Under Chinese colonization, Tibet is slowly being transformed into a land of Chinese settlers wherein the Tibetans are becoming an insignificant minority in their own country. The last four decades of Chinese rule in Tibet has systematically denied the Tibetan people the rights enshrined in the international human rights instruments. Population transfer, coercive birth control policy, religious intolerance, arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of freedom of expression and assembly, racial discrimination are some of the major human rights problems in Tibet to which IFHR wishes to draw the attention of the Commission on Human Rights at its present session.

Population transfer

3. There is international concern over reports of massive movements of Chinese into Tibet during the last decade. The current population trends in Tibet show the Tibetans being pushed further and further away from the mainstream. Day by day their legitimate role in the political, social, economic and cultural aspects of life in Tibet is becoming irrelevant. Tensions have increased as the Tibetans find themselves losing most of the opportunities in employment, housing, education and health care to Chinese settlers. The authorities are normally seen as approving these Chinese settlements.

4. Various independent reports state that during the past few years the Chinese population has increased dramatically in Tibet, particularly central Tibet. The formation of separate and distinct Tibetan and Chinese communities in most Tibetan towns indicates how far the settlement of the Chinese population in Tibet has gone. The Chinese authorities, far from doing nothing to control the influx of Chinese settlers into Tibet, have instead created new situations which will bring more Chinese into Tibet. One such situation is the lifting of check-points on the eastern borders of Tibet and proclaiming the "economic opening-up" of Tibet. The other is the growing number of shops and apartment buildings in many towns in central Tibet. Travellers to Tibet described these new situations: "Once-impoverished peasants from China's nearby Sichuan Province profiteer by buying raw materials from Tibet at State prices or by selling 'imported' Chinese goods on the free market. They share their riches with Chinese Communist Party officials who issue business permits and fund new military projects outside the city". This shows that the Chinese

authorities actually encourage and support the settlement of the Chinese population in Tibet, despite officially denying it. Through population transfer the Chinese authorities are violating yet another fundamental human right of the Tibetan people.

Coercive birth control in Tibet

5. The rapid implementation of the Chinese birth control policy in Tibet is another major concern of the Tibetan people. Tibetans claim that Tibet is under-populated, needing more human resources, while the Chinese authorities regard birth control in Tibet as a way to achieve "population quality". The Chinese authorities normally reject Tibetan views on birth control as "stubborn adherence to old customs and tradition". The fundamental question of the people of Tibet is whether this Chinese policy is another attempt to eliminate their instinct identity.

6. There is now credible and documented information that Chinese birth control practices in Tibet are being carried by irrational policies. The insidious Chinese system of restrictions on who may give birth, at what age and where, and fines of up to 2,000 yuan (US$ 233) for "illegal" children, and incentives for one-child families, including payment of 50 yuan plus five yuan per month, job promotions, etc., have forced women to abort or succumb to sterilization.

7. The Chinese authorities patronize their "family planning" campaign as essential since the "excessive growth of population has relatively slowed down the growth of economic development in our region". The policy to forcefully implement their birth control campaign in Tibet, without considering the rationale in the region, suggests that Tibetans will continue to face increasing pressure to limit the size of their families. For example, a birth control policy implementation strategy formulated by the "family planning" Office of Chabcha (Gonghe) in north-eastern Tibet and presented to the "district people's government" on 25 January 1991, which was published as document No. 90 and brought into force by a notification dated 24 June 1992, reveals that a high degree of coercion is being used among the Tibetans in the area, including specifically, among the farmers and nomads.

Religious intolerance

8. Reports and other evidence in 1993 show that Chinese authorities continue to implement a policy of discrimination based on religion in Tibet, through administrative bodies like the "Democratic Management Committee" and "Work Teams", and there is, of course, no change in the official Chinese position that one must "love the Communist Party" in order to have the rights to religious belief. Important Tibetan religious festivals (like the Monlam or the Great Prayer Festival) and prayers like Gyalwae Shabten and Dentsig Monlam remained banned.

9. The Chinese authorities have launched further "political re-education campaigns" in five nunneries in and around Lhasa: Tsamkhung, Gari, Chupsang, Shungseb and Mijungri. These campaigns are conducted by "work teams", known

in Chinese as gonzuo dui, which last year spent up to three months in regular visits to each of the above nunneries. More than 400 monks and nuns were expelled from their institutions when similar "re-education" campaigns were launched in 1990.

10. In a new attempt to limit the number of monks and nuns in Tibet, official Chinese publications have announced in 1993 that they "have decided to limit the growth in the number of monks". However, this decision seems to have ignored repeated appeals from various Tibetan monasteries to increase the number of monks or nuns. For example, at a Chinese Conference in 1992 many delegates suggested that due to a "ceiling" on the number of monks, their institutions are unable to fulfil their religious responsibilities. One delegate from Ngari (Ali) told this meeting: "In most of the monasteries in the Ngari area there is not even a single monk or nun. Therefore, the villagers are trying to be the keepers of these monasteries. In a few monasteries there are one to two monks or nuns but all of them are very old. For instance, Thonding monastery, an historically important monastery with many precious religious artifacts, has not even a single novice .... With the present number of monks it is difficult to carry on our daily religious responsibilities and also to protect and preserve the religious articles in our monasteries". Therefore, external propaganda successes are basically what the Chinese authorities target to achieve by allowing the Tibetans a limited form of religious freedom in Tibet.

Intensified repression

11. Through their campaign against "counter-revolutionaries" and "splitists", the Chinese authority repeatedly calls for the total suppression of the freedom of expression and assembly in Tibet. For instance, Zhang Zhu, political commissar of the armed police force in the "Tibet Autonomous Region", was awarded the military title of major general by the Chinese authorities in Lhasa on 1 January 1994. Zhang Zhu was praised for "taking a clear-cut stand at the forefront of the anti-splittist struggle and resolutely battling against splitist forces ...". Zhang Zhu in his speech said that he was "determined to live up to the expectations of the party" and vowed that he and his troops will "serve as daggers" with which to cope with riots and contingencies and make new contributions to opposing splitism ...". This shows that in Tibet, the Chinese authorities will continue to resort to violent means in order to suppress the free expression of political beliefs.

12. During the past two years several hundred Tibetans have been arbitrarily detained in Tibet by the Chinese authorities, especially administrative detention for long periods. In 1993, for the first time in many years, a large number of Tibetans, including artists and intellectuals, have been arrested in north-eastern Tibet (now known as Qinghai province) for alleged political activities. Under these conditions, Tibetan political prisoners remain under continued threats of torture, the practice of which is constant and systematic, unfair trial, incommunicado detention, summary execution and involuntary disappearance (generally no information is forthcoming from the authorities).

13. Similarly, more than 50 peaceful demonstrations calling for Tibetan independence, led mostly by monks and nuns, were staged, particularly in Central Tibet, in the past two years. The biggest of these demonstrations occurred on 24 May 1993, a day after a high-level European Community delegation ended their visit to Tibet. Latest reports from Lhasa stated that at least 22 Tibetan nuns were detained after staging various demonstrations in the city between 9 and 14 December 1993.

14. IFHR believes that the trend of massive and systematic human rights violations in Tibet has reached such a degree that measures ha[illegible] to be taken by the international community. Therefore, the IFHR urges the Commission on Human Rights to designate a Special Rapporteur to monitor the situation under point 12.

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